

REMARKS

There remains pending in the this application claims 1-8 and 11-19, of which claim 1 is the sole independent claim. No claims have been added or canceled.

In view the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration together with entry of the above amendments and allowance of this application are respectfully sought.

The invention as now set forth in independent claim 1 is directed to a punching device comprising a die member having a plurality of die holes formed therein, a plurality of punch members, and an operating member having cam portions formed along a direction intersecting the direction of advancement of the punch members, the operating member being moved along the direction intersecting the direction of advancement of the punch members to cause by a conversion function of the cam portions the punch members to advance into the die holes. Drive means are provided for moving the operating member. The invention is characterized in its provision of control means for controlling the drive means wherein the operating member is movable between a first rest position and a second rest position, and the control means performs an initializing operation in which the operating member is moved to the first rest position when the operating member is located nearer the second rest position than the first rest position and the operating member is moved to the second rest position when the operating member is located nearer the first rest position than the second rest position.

Claims 1-8 and 11-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Fukumoto et al. In view of the above amendments and for reasons which follow, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Fukumoto et al. features an apparatus in which three holes are punched when the cam plate 35 moves from the center position to the right side and two holes are punched when the cam plate 35 moves to the left side. See, for example, Figure 1 and column 6, line 36, through column 8, line 48. Fukumoto et al. does not, however, disclose that feature of the present invention wherein the movement of the operating member is defined as being at the time of the initializing operation. Fukumoto et al. merely discloses moving the operating member at the time of punching, but does not disclose or suggest an initializing operation for moving the operating member before punching as is now more clearly recited in claim 1.

As the Examiner will appreciate, in the present application, the initializing operation may be, for example, an operation that is performed after jam clearance or after the start of power supply, and the initializing operation is the operation for moving the operating member to the predetermined position. Such initializing operation for moving the operating member to a predetermined position is necessary to prevent the operating member from moving to a position where the punching member gets into the die hole after jam clearance or immediately after the start of a power supply.

As noted above, Fukumoto et al. discloses only moving the operating member at the time of punching and does not disclose or suggest the initializing operation for moving the operating member before punching, as called for in claim 1.

The present apparatus as set forth in claim 1 provides for advantages over prior art references such as Fukumoto et al. In the present invention, the operating member is moved to the distal rest position from among two rest positions whenever performing the initializing operation. As a result, the speed of movement of the operating member at the time of the

operating member's stopping becomes approximately constant and, therefore, the positional deviation between the actual stop position and the desired rest position can be decreased.

In circumstances where the operating member is moved, contrary to the present invention, to the proximal or nearer rest position, the operating member is stopped before the speed of movement has sufficiently increased and, therefore, the operating member may stop short of a desired rest position. See, for example, page 32, line 15, through page 33, line 16. If that happens, a distance from the actual stop position to the position for performing the punching operation will shorten whereby, the speed of the operating member at the time of performing the actual punching operation cannot sufficiently increase and it may happen that the punching action cannot be performed appropriately. Moreover, in situations where the actual stop position of the operating member after starting of the initializing operation deviates from the desired rest position in the reversal direction of the movement direction of the punching action, the distance from the actual stop position to the position for performing the punching action will increase. Therefore, it will take more time for movement of the operating member and productivity of the apparatus will decrease.

In accordance with the present invention, since the positional deviation between the actual stop position and the desired rest position can be decreased by moving the operating member to the distal rest position from among the two rest positions available at the time of the initializing operation, the above mentioned problems can be overcome and, therefore, both reliable punching operations and secure productivity can be achieved.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the invention as set forth in independent claim 1 is neither taught nor suggested by the applied art of record.

The remaining claims in this application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1, and are therefore patentable over the art of record for the reasons noted above with respect to claim 1. In addition, each recited features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicants respectfully request entry of the above amendments after final as they are being presented in an earnest effort to advance prosecution and place the application in condition for allowance. These amendments were not earlier presented as Applicants were of the firm belief that the claims previously on file were already in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in this application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and an early passage to issue of the above application are respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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